

Songs and Sonnets

John Donne



The Perfect Library



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2022 with funding from
Kahle/Austin Foundation

https://archive.org/details/isbn_9781514194539

Songs and Sonnets

JOHN DONNE

Published in 1661

TABLE OF CONTENTS

A FEVER

A HYMN TO GOD THE FATHERWILT THOU
FORGIVE THAT SIN WHERE I BEGUN,

A JET RING SENT

A LECTURE UPON THE SHADOWSTAND STILL,
AND I WILL READ TO THEE

A NOCTURNAL UPON S. LUCY'S DAY, BEING THE
SHORTEST DAY'TIS THE YEAR'S MIDNIGHT, AND
IT IS THE DAY'S,

A VALEDICTION: FORBIDDING MOURNINGAS
VIRTUOUS MEN PASS MILDLY AWAY,

A VALEDICTION: OF MY NAME, IN THE WINDOW

A VALEDICTION: OF WEEPING

AIR AND ANGELS

BREAK OF DAY

COMMUNITY

CONFINED LOVE

FAREWELL TO LOVE

'TIS BUT APPLYING WORM-SEED TO THE
TAIL.LOVE'S ALCHEMYSOME THAT HAVE
DEEPER DIGG'D LOVE'S MINE THAN I,

LOVE'S DIET

LOVE'S DEITY

LOVE'S EXCHANGE

LOVE'S GROWTH

LOVE'S USURYFOR EVERY HOUR THAT THOU
WILT SPARE ME NOW,

LOVERS' INFINITENESS

NEGATIVE LOVE

SELF-LOVE

SONG: "GOE AND CATCHE A FALLING STARRE"

SONG: "SWEETEST LOVE, I DO NOT

GO" SWEETEST LOVE, I DO NOT GO,

THE ANNIVERSARY

TO WRITE THRESCORE; THIS IS THE SECOND

OF OUR REIGN. THE APPARITION

THE BLOSSOM

THE CANONIZATION

THE COMPUTATION

THE CURSE WHOEVER GUESSES, THINKS, OR
DREAMS, HE KNOWS

THE DAMP

THE DISSOLUTION

THE DREAM

THE ECSTASY

THE EXPIRATION SO, SO, BREAK OFF THIS LAST
LAMENTING KISS,

THE FLEA

THE FUNERAL

THE GOOD-MORROW

THE INDIFFERENT

THE LEGACY

THE MESSAGE

THE PARADOX

THE PRIMROSE, BEING AT MONTGOMERY

CASTLE, UPON THE HILL, ON WHICH IT IS
SITUATE
THE PROHIBITION
THE RELIC
THE SUN RISING
THE TOKENSEND ME SOME TOKENS, THAT MY
HOPE MAY LIVE
THE TRIPLE FOOL
THE UNDERTAKING
THE WILL
TWICKENHAM GARDEN
VALEDICTION TO HIS BOOK
BUT TO MARK WHEN AND WHERE THE DARK
ECLIPSES BE?WITCHCRAFT BY A PICTUREI FIX
MINE EYE ON THINE, AND THERE
WOMAN'S CONSTANCY

A FEVER

O ! DO not die, for I shall hate
All women so, when thou art gone,
That thee I shall not celebrate,
When I remember thou wast one.
But yet thou canst not die, I know;
To leave this world behind, is death;
But when thou from this world wilt go,
The whole world vapours with thy breath.Or if, when thou, the world's
soul, go'st,
It stay, 'tis but thy carcase then;
The fairest woman, but thy ghost,
But corrupt worms, the worthiest men.O wrangling schools, that search
what fire
Shall burn this world, had none the wit
Unto this knowledge to aspire,
That this her feaver might be it?
And yet she cannot waste by this,
Nor long bear this torturing wrong,
For more corruption needful is,
To fuel such a fever long.
These burning fits but meteors be,
Whose matter in thee is soon spent;
Thy beauty, and all parts, which are thee,
Are unchangeable firmament.
Yet 'twas of my mind, seizing thee,

JOHN DONNE

Though it in thee cannot perséver;
For I had rather owner be
Of thee one hour, than all else ever.

A HYMN TO GOD THE FATHER WILT THOU FORGIVE THAT SIN WHERE I BEGUN,

Which is my sin, though it were done before?
Wilt thou forgive that sin through which I run,
And do run still, though still I do deplore?
When thou hast done, thou hast not done,
For I have more. Wilt thou forgive that sin by which I have won
Others to sin? and made my sin their door?
Wilt thou forgive that sin which I did shun
A year or two, but swallowed in a score?
When thou hast done, thou hast not done,
For I have more.
I have a sin of fear, that when I have spun
My last thread, I shall perish on the shore;
Swear by thy self, that at my death thy Son
Shall shine as he shines now and heretofore;
And, having done that, thou hast done,
I fear no more.

A JET RING SENT

THOU art not so black as my heart,
Nor half so brittle as her heart, thou art;
What would'st thou say? shall both our properties by thee be spoke,
-Nothing more endless, nothing sooner broke?
Marriage rings are not of this stuff;
Oh, why should ought less precious, or less tough
Figure our loves? except in thy name thou have bid it say,
"-I'm cheap, and nought but fashion; fling me away."
Yet stay with me since thou art come,
Circle this finger's top, which didst her thumb;
Be justly proud, and gladly safe, that thou dost dwell with me;
She that, O! broke her faith, would soon break thee.

A LECTURE UPON THE SHADOWSTAND STILL, AND I WILL READ TO THEE

A lecture, Love, in Love's philosophy.
These three hours that we have spent,
Walking here, two shadows went
Along with us, which we ourselves produc'd.
But, now the sun is just above our head,
We do those shadows tread,
And to brave clearness all things are reduc'd.
So whilst our infant loves did grow,
Disguises did, and shadows, flow
From us and our cares; but now 'tis not so.
That love hath not attain'd the highest degree,
Which is still diligent lest others see.
Except our loves at this noon stay,
We shall new shadows make the other way.
As the first were made to blind
Others, these which come behind
Will work upon ourselves, and blind our eyes.
If our loves faint, and westerwardly decline,
To me thou, falsely, thine
And I to thee mine actions shall disguise.
The morning shadows wear away,
But these grow longer all the day;
But O! love's day is short, if love decay.Love is a growing, or full constant
light,
And his short minute, after noon, is night.

JOHN DONNE

A NOCTURNAL UPON S. LUCY'S DAY, BEING THE
SHORTEST DAY'TIS THE YEAR'S MIDNIGHT, AND
IT IS THE DAY'S,

Lucy's, who scarce seven hours herself unmasks;
The sun is spent, and now his flasks
Send forth light squibs, no constant rays;
The world's whole sap is sunk;
The general balm th' hydroptic earth hath drunk,
Whither, as to the bed's-feet, life is shrunk,
Dead and interr'd; yet all these seem to laugh,
Compared with me, who am their epitaph.
Study me then, you who shall lovers be
At the next world, that is, at the next spring;
For I am every dead thing,
In whom Love wrought new alchemy.
For his art did express
A quintessence even from nothingness,
From dull privations, and lean emptiness;
He ruin'd me, and I am re-begot
Of absence, darkness, death-things which are not.
All others, from all things, draw all that's good,
Life, soul, form, spirit, whence they being have;
I, by Love's limbec, am the grave
Of all, that's nothing. Oft a flood
Have we two wept, and so
Drown'd the whole world, us two; oft did we grow,
To be two chaoses, when we did show

Care to aught else; and often absences
Withdrew our souls, and made us carcasses.
But I am by her death—which word wrongs her—
Of the first nothing the elixir grown;
Were I a man, that I were one
I needs must know; I should prefer,
If I were any beast,
Some ends, some means; yea plants, yea stones detest,
And love; all, all some properties invest.
If I an ordinary nothing were,
As shadow, a light, and body must be here.
But I am none; nor will my sun renew.
You lovers, for whose sake the lesser sun
At this time to the Goat is run
To fetch new lust, and give it you,
Enjoy your summer all,
Since she enjoys her long night's festival.
Let me prepare towards her, and let me call
This hour her vigil, and her eve, since this
Both the year's and the day's deep midnight is.

A VALEDICTION: FORBIDDING MOURNING AS VIRTUOUS MEN PASS MILDLY AWAY,

And whisper to their souls to go,
Whilst some of their sad friends do say,
"Now his breath goes," and some say, "No."
So let us melt, and make no noise,
No tear-floods, nor sigh-tempests move;
'Twere profanation of our joys
To tell the laity our love.
Moving of th' earth brings harms and fears;
Men reckon what it did, and meant;
But trepidation of the spheres,
Though greater far, is innocent.
Dull sublunary lovers' love
Whose soul is sense—cannot admit
Of absence, 'cause it doth remove
The thing which elemented it.
But we by a love so much refined,
That ourselves know not what it is,
Inter-assured of the mind,
Care less, eyes, lips and hands to miss.
Our two souls therefore, which are one,
Though I must go, endure not yet
A breach, but an expansion,
Like gold to aer y thinness beat.
If they be two, they are two so

As stiff twin compasses are two;
Thy soul, the fix'd foot, makes no show
To move, but doth, if th' other do.
And though it in the centre sit,
Yet, when the other far doth roam,
It leans, and hearkens after it,
And grows erect, as that comes home.
Such wilt thou be to me, who must,
Like th' other foot, obliquely run;
Thy firmness makes my circle just
And makes me end where I begun.

A VALEDICTION: OF MY NAME, IN THE WINDOW

I.

MY name engraved herein
Doth contribute my firmness to this glass,
Which ever since that charm hath been
As hard, as that which graved it was;
Thine eye will give it price enough, to mock
The diamonds of either rock.
'Tis much that glass should be
As all-confessing, and through-shine as I;
'Tis more that it shows thee to thee,
And clear reflects thee to thine eye.
But all such rules love's magic can undo;
Here you see me, and I am you.

III.

As no one point, nor dash,
Which are but accessories to this name,
The showers and tempests can outwash
So shall all times find me the same;
You this entireness better may fulfill,
Who have the pattern with you still.

IV.

Or if too hard and deep
This learning be, for a scratch'd name to teach,
It as a given death's head keep,
Lovers' mortality to preach;
Or think this ragged bony name to be

My ruinous anatomy.

V. Then, as all my souls be
Emparadised in you-in whom alone
I understand, and grow, and see-
The rafters of my body, bone,
Being still with you, the muscle, sinew, and vein
Which tile this house, will come again.

VI. Till my return repair
And recompact my scatter'd body so,
As all the virtuous powers which are
Fix'd in the stars are said to flow
Into such characters as gravèd be
When these stars have supremacy.

VII.

So since this name was cut,
When love and grief their exaltation had,
No door 'gainst this name's influence shut.
As much more loving, as more sad,
'Twill make thee; and thou shouldst, till I return,
Since I die daily, daily mourn.

VIII.

When thy inconsiderate hand
Flings open this casement, with my trembling name,
To look on one, whose wit or land
New battery to thy heart may frame,
Then think this name alive, and that thou thus
In it offend'st my Genius. IX. And when thy melted maid,
Corrupted by thy lover's gold and page,
His letter at thy pillow hath laid,
Disputed it, and tamed thy rage,
And thou begin'st to thaw towards him, for this,
May my name step in, and hide his.

X.

And if this treason go
To an overt act and that thou write again,
In superscribing, this name flow
Into thy fancy from the pane;
So, in forgetting thou rememb'rest right,
And unaware to me shalt write.

XI.

But glass and lines must be
No means our firm substantial love to keep;
Near death inflicts this lethargy,
And this I murmur in my sleep;
Inpute this idle talk, to that I go,
For dying men talk often so.

A VALEDICTION: OF WEEPING

LET me pour forth
My tears before thy face, whilst I stay here,
For thy face coins them, and thy stamp they bear,
And by this mintage they are something worth.
For thus they be
Pregnant of thee;
Fruits of much grief they are, emblems of more;
When a tear falls, that thou fall'st which it bore;
So thou and I are nothing then, when on a divers shore.
On a round ball
A workman, that hath copies by, can lay
An Europe, Afric, and an Asia,
And quickly make that, which was nothing, all.
So doth each tear,
Which thee doth wear,
A globe, yea world, by that impression grow,
Till thy tears mix'd with mine do overflow
This world, by waters sent from thee, my heaven dissolvèd so.
O ! more than moon,
Draw not up seas to drown me in thy sphere;
Weep me not dead, in thine arms, but forbear
To teach the sea, what it may do too soon;
Let not the wind
Example find
To do me more harm than it purposeth:
Since thou and I sigh one another's breath,

JOHN DONNE

Whoe'er sighs most is cruellest, and hastes the other's death.

AIR AND ANGELS

TWICE or thrice had I loved thee,
Before I knew thy face or name;
So in a voice, so in a shapeless flame
Angels affect us oft, and worshipp'd be.
Still when, to where thou wert, I came,
Some lovely glorious nothing did I see.
But since my soul, whose child love is,
Takes limbs of flesh, and else could nothing do,
More subtle than the parent is
Love must not be, but take a body too;
And therefore what thou wert, and who,
I bid Love ask, and now
That it assume thy body, I allow,
And fix itself in thy lip, eye, and brow.
Whilst thus to ballast love I thought,
And so more steadily to have gone,
With wares which would sink admiration,
I saw I had love's pinnace overfraught;
Thy every hair for love to work upon
Is much too much; some fitter must be sought;
For, nor in nothing, nor in things
Extreme, and scattering bright, can love inhere;
Then as an angel face and wings
Of air, not pure as it, yet pure doth wear,
So thy love may be my love's sphere;
Just such disparity
As is 'twixt air's and angels' purity,

JOHN DONNE

'Twixt women's love, and men's, will ever be

BREAK OF DAY

'TIS true, 'tis day ; what though it be?
O, wilt thou therefore rise from me?
Why should we rise because 'tis light?
Did we lie down because 'twas night?
Love, which in spite of darkness brought us hither,
Should in despite of light keep us together.Light hath no tongue, but is all
eye;
If it could speak as well as spy,
This were the worst that it could say,
That being well I fain would stay,
And that I loved my heart and honour so
That I would not from him, that had them, go.
Must business thee from hence remove?
O ! that's the worst disease of love,
The poor, the foul, the false, love can
Admit, but not the busied man.
He which hath business, and makes love, doth do
Such wrong, as when a married man doth woo.

COMMUNITY

Good we must love, and must hate ill,
For ill is ill, and good good still;
But there are things indifferent,
Which we may neither hate, nor love,
But one, and then another prove,
As we shall find our fancy bent.
If then at first wise Nature had
Made women either good or bad,
Then some we might hate, and some choose;
But since she did them so create,
That we may neither love, nor hate,
Only this rests, all all may use.
If they were good it would be seen;
Good is as visible as green,
And to all eyes itself betrays.
If they were bad, they could not last;
Bad doth itself, and others waste;
So they deserve nor blame, nor praise.
But they are ours as fruits are ours;
He that but tastes, he that devours,
And he that leaves all, doth as well;
Changed loves are but changed sorts of meat;
And when he hath the kernel eat,
Who doth not fling away the shell?

CONFINED LOVE

Some man unworthy to be possessor
Of old or new love, himself being false or weak,
Thought his pain and shame would be lesser,
If on womankind he might his anger wreak;
And thence a law did grow,
One might but one man know;

But are other creatures so?
Are sun, moon, or stars by law forbidden
To smile where they list, or lend away their light?
Are birds divorced or are they chidden
If they leave their mate, or lie abroad a night?
Beasts do no jointures lose
Though they new lovers choose;

But we are made worse than those.
Who e'er rigg'd fair ships to lie in harbours,
And not to seek lands, or not to deal with all?
Or built fair houses, set trees, and arbours,
Only to lock up, or else to let them fall?
Good is not good, unless
A thousand it possess,
But doth waste with greediness.

FAREWELL TO LOVE

WHILST yet to prove
I thought there was some deity in love,
So did I reverence, and gave
Worship; as atheists at their dying hour
Call, what they cannot name, an unknown power,
As ignorantly did I crave.
Thus when
Things not yet known are coveted by men,
Our desires give them fashion, and so
As they wax lesser, fall, as they size, grow.
But, from late fair,
His highness sitting in a golden chair,
Is not less cared for after three days
By children, than the thing which lovers so
Blindly admire, and with such worship woo;
Being had, enjoying it decays;
And thence,
What before pleased them all, takes but one sense,
And that so lamely, as it leaves behind
A kind of sorrowing dulness to the mind.
Ah cannot we,
As well as cocks and lions, jocund be
After such pleasures, unless wise
Nature decreed-since each such act, they say,
Diminisheth the length of life a day-
This; as she would man should despise
The sport,

Because that other curse of being short,
And only for a minute made to be
Eager, desires to raise posterity.
Since so, my mind
Shall not desire what no man else can find;
I'll no more dote and run
To pursue things which had endamaged me;
And when I come where moving beauties be,
As men do when the summer's sun
Grows great,
Though I admire their greatness, shun their heat.
Each place can afford shadows; if all fail,

'TIS BUT APPLYING WORM-SEED TO THE
TAIL LOVE'S ALCHEMYSOME THAT HAVE
DEEPER DIGG'D LOVE'S MINE THAN I,

Say, where his centric happiness doth lie.
I have loved, and got, and told,
But should I love, get, tell, till I were old,
I should not find that hidden mystery.
O! 'tis imposture all;
And as no chemic yet th' elixir got,
But glorifies his pregnant pot,
If by the way to him befall
Some odoriferous thing, or medicinal,
So, lovers dream a rich and long delight,
But get a winter-seeming summer's night.
Our ease, our thrift, our honour, and our day,
Shall we for this vain bubble's shadow pay?
Ends love in this, that my man
Can be as happy as I can, if he can
Endure the short scorn of a bridegroom's play?
That loving wretch that swears,
'Tis not the bodies marry, but the minds,
Which he in her angelic finds,
Would swear as justly, that he hears,
In that day's rude hoarse minstrelsy, the spheres.
Hope not for mind in women; at their best,
Sweetness and wit they are, but mummy, possess'd.

JOHN DONNE

LOVE'S DIET

TO what a cumbersome unwieldiness
And burdenous corpulence my love had grown,
But that I did, to make it less,
And keep it in proportion,
Give it a diet, made it feed upon

That which love worst endures, discretion
Above one sigh a day I allow'd him not,
Of which my fortune, and my faults had part;
And if sometimes by stealth he got
A she sigh from my mistress' heart,
And thought to feast upon that, I let him see

'Twas neither very sound, nor meant to me.
If he wrung from me a tear, I brined it so
With scorn and shame, that him it nourish'd not;
If he suck'd hers, I let him know

'Twas not a tear which he had got;
His drink was counterfeit, as was his meat;

For eyes, which roll towards all, weep not, but sweat.
Whatever he would dictate I writ that,
But burnt her letters when she writ to me;
And if that favour made him fat,
I said, "If any title be
Convey'd by this, ah! what doth it avail,
To be the fortieth name in an entail?"
Thus I reclaim'd my buzzard love, to fly
At what, and when, and how, and where I choose.

JOHN DONNE

Now negligent of sports I lie,
And now, as other falconers use,
I spring a mistress, swear, write, sigh, and weep;
And the game kill'd, or lost, go talk or sleep.

LOVE'S DEITY

I LONG to talk with some old lover's ghost,
Who died before the god of love was born.
I cannot think that he, who then loved most,
Sunk so low as to love one which did scorn.
But since this god produced a destiny,
And that vice-nature, custom, lets it be,
I must love her that loves not me.
Sure, they which made him god, meant not so much,
Nor he in his young godhead practised it.
But when an even flame two hearts did touch,
His office was indulgently to fit
Actives to passives. Correspondency
Only his subject was; it cannot be
Love, till I love her, who loves me.
But every modern god will now extend
His vast prerogative as far as Jove.
To rage, to lust, to write to, to command,
All is the purlieu of the god of love.
O! were we waken'd by this tyranny
To ungod this child again, it could not be
I should love her, who loves not me. Rebel and atheist too, why murmur I,
As though I felt the worst that love could do?
Love might make me leave loving, or might try
A deeper plague, to make her love me too;
Which, since she loves before, I'm loth to see.
Falsehood is worse than hate; and that must be,

JOHN DONNE

If she whom I love, should love me.

LOVE'S EXCHANGE

LOVE, any devil else but you
Would for a given soul give something too.
At court your fellows every day
Give th' art of rhyming, huntsmanship, or play,
For them which were their own before;
Only I have nothing, which gave more,
But am, alas ! by being lowly, lower.
I ask no dispensation now,
To falsify a tear, or sigh, or vow;
I do not sue from thee to draw
A non obstante on nature's law;
These are prerogatives, they inhere
In thee and thine; none should forswear
Except that he Love's minion were.
Give me thy weakness, make me blind,
Both ways, as thou and thine, in eyes and mind;
Love, let me never know that this
Is love, or, that love childish is;
Let me not know that others know
That she knows my paines, lest that so
A tender shame make me mine own new woe.

If thou give nothing, yet thou 'rt just,
Because I would not thy first motions trust;
Small towns which stand stiff, till great shot
Enforce them, by war's law condition not;
Such in Love's warfare is my case;

I may not article for grace,
Having put Love at last to show this face.
This face, by which he could command
And change th' idolatry of any land,
This face, which, wheresoe'er it comes,
Can call vow'd men from cloisters, dead from tombs,
And melt both poles at once, and store
Deserts with cities, and make more
Mines in the earth, than quarries were before.
For this Love is enraged with me,
Yet kills not; if I must example be
To future rebels, if th' unborn
Must learn by my being cut up and torn,
Kill, and dissect me, Love; for this
Torture against thine own end is;
Rack'd carcasses make ill anatomies.

LOVE'S GROWTH

I SCARCE believe my love to be so pure
As I had thought it was,
Because it doth endure
Vicissitude, and season, as the grass;
Methinks I lied all winter, when I swore
My love was infinite, if spring make it more.
But if this medicine, love, which cures all sorrow
With more, not only be no quintessence,
But mix'd of all stuffs, vexing soul, or sense,
And of the sun his active vigour borrow,
Love's not so pure, and abstract as they use
To say, which have no mistress but their Muse;
But as all else, being elemented too,
Love sometimes would contemplate, sometimes do.
And yet no greater, but more eminent,
Love by the spring is grown;
As in the firmament
Stars by the sun are not enlarged, but shown,
Gentle love deeds, as blossoms on a bough,
From love's awakened root do bud out now.
If, as in water stirr'd more circles be
Produced by one, love such additions take,
Those like so many spheres but one heaven make,
For they are all concentric unto thee;
And though each spring do add to love new heat,
As princes do in times of action get

JOHN DONNE

New taxes, and remit them not in peace,
No winter shall abate this spring's increase.

LOVE'S USURY FOR EVERY HOUR THAT THOU WILT SPARE ME NOW,

I will allow,
Usurious god of love, twenty to thee,
When with my brown my gray hairs equal be.
Till then, Love, let my body range, and let
Me travel, sojourn, snatch, plot, have, forget,
Resume my last year's relict; think that yet
We'd never met.
Let me think any rival's letter mine,
And at next nine
Keep midnight's promise; mistake by the way
The maid, and tell the lady of that delay;
Only let me love none; no, not the sport
From country grass to confitures of court,
Or city's quelque-choses; let not report
My mind transport.
This bargain's good; if when I'm old, I be
Inflamed by thee,
If thine own honour, or my shame and pain,
Thou covet most, at that age thou shalt gain.
Do thy will then; then subject and degree
And fruit of love, Love, I submit to thee.
Spare me till then; I'll bear it, though she be
One that love me.

LOVERS' INFINITENESS

IF yet I have not all thy love,
Dear, I shall never have it all;
I cannot breathe one other sigh, to move,
Nor can intreat one other tear to fall;
And all my treasure, which should purchase thee,
Sighs, tears, and oaths, and letters I have spent;
Yet no more can be due to me,
Than at the bargain made was meant.
If then thy gift of love were partial,
That some to me, some should to others fall,
Dear, I shall never have thee all.
Or if then thou gavest me all,
All was but all, which thou hadst then;
But if in thy heart since there be or shall
New love created be by other men,
Which have their stocks entire, and can in tears,
In sighs, in oaths, and letters, outbid me,
This new love may beget new fears,
For this love was not vow'd by thee.
And yet it was, thy gift being general;
The ground, thy heart, is mine; what ever shall
Grow there, dear, I should have it all.
Yet I would not have all yet.
He that hath all can have no more;
And since my love doth every day admit
New growth, thou shouldst have new rewards in store;
Thou canst not every day give me thy heart,

If thou canst give it, then thou never gavest it;
Love's riddles are, that though thy heart depart,
It stays at home, and thou with losing savest it;
But we will have a way more liberal,
Than changing hearts, to join them; so we shall
Be one, and one another's all.

NEGATIVE LOVE

I NEVER stoop'd so low, as they
Which on an eye, cheek, lip, can prey;
Seldom to them which soar no higher
Than virtue, or the mind to admire.
For sense and understanding may
Know what gives fuel to their fire;
My love, though silly, is more brave;
For may I miss, whene'er I crave,
If I know yet what I would have.
If that be simply perfectest,
Which can by no way be express'd
But negatives, my love is so.
To all, which all love, I say no.
If any who deciphers best,
What we know not-ourselves-can know,
Let him teach me that nothing. This
As yet my ease and comfort is,
Though I speed not, I cannot miss.

SELF-LOVE

HE that cannot choose but love,
And strives against it still,
Never shall my fancy move,
For he loves against his will;
Nor he which is all his own,
And cannot pleasure choose;
When I am caught he can be gone,
And when he list refuse;
Nor he that loves none but fair,
For such by all are sought;
Nor he that can for foul ones care,
For his judgement then is nought;
Nor he that hath wit, for he
Will make me his jest or slave;
Nor a fool when others -
He can neither -
Nor he that still his mistress prays,
For she is thrall'd therefore;
Nor he that pays, not, for he says
Within, she's worth no more.
Is there then no kind of men
Whom I may freely prove?
I will vent that humour then
In mine own self-love.

SONG: "GOE AND CATCHE A FALLING STARRE"

Go and catch a falling star,
Get with child a mandrake root,
Tell me where all past years are,
Or who cleft the devil's foot,
Teach me to hear mermaids singing,
Or to keep off envy's stinging,
And find
What wind

Serves to advance an honest mind.
If thou be'st born to strange sights,
Things invisible to see,
Ride ten thousand days and nights,
Till age snow white hairs on thee,
Thou, when thou return'st, wilt tell me,
All strange wonders that befell thee,
And swear,
No where

Lives a woman true and fair.
If thou find'st one, let me know,
Such a pilgrimage were sweet;
Yet do not, I would not go,
Though at next door we might meet,
Though she were true, when you met her,
And last, till you write your letter,
Yet she
Will be

JOHN DONNE

False, ere I come, to two, or three.

SONG: "SWEETEST LOVE, I DO NOT
GO" SWEETEST LOVE, I DO NOT GO,

For weariness of thee,
Nor in hope the world can show
A fitter love for me;
But since that I
At the last must part, 'tis best,
Thus to use myself in jest

By feigned deaths to die.Yesternight the sun went hence,
And yet is here to-day;
He hath no desire nor sense,
Nor half so short a way;
Then fear not me,
But believe that I shall make
Speedier journeys, since I take
More wings and spurs than he.
O how feeble is man's power,
That if good fortune fall,
Cannot add another hour,
Nor a lost hour recall;
But come bad chance,
And we join to it our strength,
And we teach it art and length,

Itself o'er us to advance.When thou sigh'st, thou sigh'st not wind,
But sigh'st my soul away;
When thou weep'st, unkindly kind,
My life's blood doth decay.

It cannot be
That thou lovest me as thou say'st,
If in thine my life thou waste,
That art the best of me.
Let not thy divining heart
Forethink me any ill;
Destiny may take thy part,
And may thy fears fulfil.
But think that we
Are but turn'd aside to sleep.
They who one another keep
Alive, ne'er parted be.

THE ANNIVERSARY

ALL kings, and all their favourites,
All glory of honours, beauties, wits,
The sun it self, which makes time, as they pass,
Is elder by a year now than it was
When thou and I first one another saw.
All other things to their destruction draw,
Only our love hath no decay;
This no to-morrow hath, nor yesterday;
Running it never runs from us away,
But truly keeps his first, last, everlasting day.
Two graves must hide thine and my corse;
If one might, death were no divorce.
Alas ! as well as other princes, we
Who prince enough in one another be-
Must leave at last in death these eyes and ears,
Oft fed with true oaths, and with sweet salt tears;
But souls where nothing dwells but love
All other thoughts being inmates-then shall prove
This or a love increased there above,
When bodies to their graves, souls from their graves remove.
And then we shall be throughly blest;
But now no more than all the rest.
Here upon earth we're kings, and none but we
Can be such kings, nor of such subjects be.
Who is so safe as we? where none can do
Treason to us, except one of us two.
True and false fears let us refrain,

JOHN DONNE

Let us love nobly, and live, and add again
Years and years unto years, till we attain

TO WRITE THRESCORE; THIS IS THE SECOND OF OUR REIGN.THE APPARITION

WHEN by thy scorn, O murd'ress, I am dead,
And that thou thinkst thee free
From all solicitation from me,
Then shall my ghost come to thy bed,
And thee, feign'd vestal, in worse arms shall see:
Then thy sick taper will begin to wink,
And he, whose thou art then, being tired before,
Will, if thou stir, or pinch to wake him, think
Thou call'st for more,
And, in false sleep, will from thee shrink:
And then, poor aspen wretch, neglected thou
Bathed in a cold quicksilver sweat wilt lie,
A verier ghost than I.
What I will say, I will not tell thee now,
Lest that preserve thee; and since my love is spent,
I'd rather thou shouldst painfully repent,
Than by my threatenings rest still innocent.

THE BAIT

COME live with me, and be my love,
And we will some new pleasures prove
Of golden sands, and crystal brooks,
With silken lines and silver hooks.
There will the river whisp'ring run
Warm'd by thy eyes, more than the sun;
And there th' enamour'd fish will stay,

Begging themselves they may betray.
When thou wilt swim in that live bath,
Each fish, which every channel hath,
Will amorously to thee swim,
Gladder to catch thee, than thou him.
If thou, to be so seen, be'st loth,
By sun or moon, thou dark'nest both,
And if myself have leave to see,
I need not their light, having thee.
Let others freeze with angling reeds,
And cut their legs with shells and weeds,
Or treacherously poor fish beset,
With strangling snare, or windowy net.
Let coarse bold hands from slimy nest
The bedded fish in banks out-wrest;
Or curious traitors, sleeve-silk flies,
Bewitch poor fishes' wand'ring eyes. For thee, thou need'st no such deceit,
For thou thyself art thine own bait:
That fish, that is not catch'd thereby,
Alas! is wiser far than I.

THE BLOSSOM

LITTLE think'st thou, poor flower,
Whom I've watch'd six or seven days,
And seen thy birth, and seen what every hour
Gave to thy growth, thee to this height to raise,
And now dost laugh and triumph on this bough,
Little think'st thou,
That it will freeze anon, and that I shall
To-morrow find thee fallen, or not at all.
Little think'st thou, poor heart,
That labourest yet to nestle thee,
And think'st by hovering here to get a part
In a forbidden or forbidding tree,
And hopest her stiffness by long siege to bow,
Little think'st thou
That thou to-morrow, ere the sun doth wake,
Must with the sun and me a journey take.
But thou, which lovest to be
Subtle to plague thyself, wilt say,
Alas! if you must go, what's that to me?
Here lies my business, and here I will stay
You go to friends, whose love and means present
Various content
To your eyes, ears, and taste, and every part;
If then your body go, what need your heart?
Well then, stay here; but know,
When thou hast stay'd and done thy most,

A naked thinking heart, that makes no show,
 Is to a woman but a kind of ghost.
 How shall she know my heart; or having none,
 Know thee for one?
 Practice may make her know some other part;
 But take my word, she doth not know a heart.
 Meet me in London, then,
 Twenty days hence, and thou shalt see
 Me fresher and more fat, by being with men,
 Than if I had stay'd still with her and thee.
 For God's sake, if you can, be you so too;
 I will give you
 There to another friend, whom we shall find
 As glad to have my body as my mind.

THE BROKEN HEART

He is stark mad, whoever says,
 That he hath been in love an hour,
 Yet not that love so soon decays,
 But that it can ten in less space devour;
 Who will believe me, if I swear
 That I have had the plague a year?
 Who would not laugh at me, if I should say
 I saw a flash of powder burn a day?
 Ah, what a trifle is a heart,
 If once into love's hands it come!
 All other griefs allow a part
 To other griefs, and ask themselves but some;
 They come to us, but us love draws;
 He swallows us and never chaws;
 By him, as by chain'd shot, whole ranks do die;
 He is the tyrant pike, our hearts the fry. If 'twere not so, what did become
 Of my heart when I first saw thee?
 I brought a heart into the room,
 But from the room I carried none with me.
 If it had gone to thee, I know
 Mine would have taught thine heart to show
 More pity unto me; but Love, alas!
 At one first blow did shiver it as glass.
 Yet nothing can to nothing fall,
 Nor any place be empty quite;
 Therefore I think my breast hath all

Those pieces still, though they be not unite;
And now, as broken glasses show
A hundred lesser faces, so
My rags of heart can like, wish, and adore,
But after one such love, can love no more.

THE CANONIZATION

FOR God's sake hold your tongue, and let me love;
Or chide my palsy, or my gout;
My five gray hairs, or ruin'd fortune flout;
With wealth your state, your mind with arts improve;
Take you a course, get you a place,
Observe his Honour, or his Grace;
Or the king's real, or his stamp'd face
Contemplate; what you will, approve,
So you will let me love.
Alas ! alas ! who's injured by my love?
What merchant's ships have my sighs drown'd?
Who says my tears have overflow'd his ground?
When did my colds a forward spring remove?
When did the heats which my veins fill
Add one more to the plaguy bill?
Soldiers find wars, and lawyers find out still
Litigious men, which quarrels move,
Though she and I do love.
Call's what you will, we are made such by love;
Call her one, me another fly,
We're tapers too, and at our own cost die,
And we in us find th' eagle and the dove.
The phoenix riddle hath more wit
By us; we two being one, are it;
So, to one neutral thing both sexes fit.
We die and rise the same, and prove

Mysterious by this love.
We can die by it, if not live by love,
And if unfit for tomb or hearse
Our legend be, it will be fit for verse;
And if no piece of chronicle we prove,
We'll build in sonnets pretty rooms;
As well a well-wrought urn becomes
The greatest ashes, as half-acre tombs,
And by these hymns, all shall approve
Us canonized for love;
And thus invoke us, "You, whom reverend love
Made one another's hermitage;
You, to whom love was peace, that now is rage;
Who did the whole world's soul contract, and drove
Into the glasses of your eyes;
So made such mirrors, and such spies,
That they did all to you epitomize—
Countries, towns, courts beg from above
A pattern of your love."

THE COMPUTATION

For my first twenty years, since yesterday,
I scarce believed thou couldst be gone away;
For forty more I fed on favours past,
And forty on hopes that thou wouldest they might last;
Tears drown'd one hundred, and sighs blew out two;
A thousand, I did neither think nor do,
Or not divide, all being one thought of you;
Or in a thousand more, forgot that too.
Yet call not this long life; but think that I
Am, by being dead, immortal; can ghosts die?

THE CURSE WHOEVER GUESSES, THINKS, OR DREAMS, HE KNOWS

Who is my mistress, wither by this curse;
Him, only for his purse
May some dull whore to love dispose,
And then yield unto all that are his foes;
May he be scorn'd by one, whom all else scorn,
Forswear to others, what to her he hath sworn,
With fear of missing, shame of getting, torn.
Madness his sorrow, gout his cramps, may he
Make, by but thinking who hath made him such;
And may he feel no touch
Of conscience, but of fame, and be
Anguish'd, not that 'twas sin, but that 'twas she;
Or may he for her virtue reverence
One that hates him only for impotence,
And equal traitors be she and his sense.
May he dream treason, and believe that he
Meant to perform it, and confesses, and die,
And no record tell why;
His sons, which none of his may be,
Inherit nothing but his infamy;
Or may he so long parasites have fed,
That he would fain be theirs whom he hath bred,
And at the last be circumcised for bread.
The venom of all stepdames, gamesters' gall,
What tyrants and their subjects interwish,

What plants, mine, beasts, fowl, fish,
Can contribute, all ill, which all
Prophets or poets spake, and all which shall
Be annex'd in schedules unto this by me,
Fall on that man; For if it be a she
Nature beforehand hath out-cursèd me.

'THE DAMP

WHEN I am dead, and doctors know not why,
And my friends' curiosity
Will have me cut up to survey each part,
When they shall find your picture in my heart,
You think a sudden damp of love
Will thorough all their senses move,
And work on them as me, and so prefer
Your murder to the name of massacre,
Poor victories; but if you dare be brave,
And pleasure in your conquest have,
First kill th' enormous giant, your Disdain;
And let th' enchantress Honour, next be slain;
And like a Goth and Vandal rise,
Deface records and histories
Of your own arts and triumphs over men,
And without such advantage kill me then,
For I could muster up, as well as you,
My giants, and my witches too,
Which are vast Constancy and Secretness;
But these I neither look for nor profess;
Kill me as woman, let me die
As a mere man; do you but try
Your passive valour, and you shall find then,
Naked you have odds enough of any man.

JOHN DONNE

THE DISSOLUTION

SHE's dead; and all which die
To their first elements resolve;
And we were mutual elements to us,
And made of one another.
My body then doth hers involve,
And those things whereof I consist hereby
In me abundant grow, and burdenous,
And nourish not, but smother.
My fire of passion, sighs of air,
Water of tears, and earthly sad despair,
Which my materials be,
But near worn out by love's security,
She, to my loss, doth by her death repair.
And I might live long wretched so,
But that my fire doth with my fuel grow.
Now, as those active kings
Whose foreign conquest treasure brings,
Receive more, and spend more, and soonest break,
This -which I am amazed that I can speak-
This death, hath with my store
My use increased.
And so my soul, more earnestly released,
Will outstrip hers; as bullets flown before
A latter bullet may o'ertake, the powder being more.

THE DREAM

DEAR love, for nothing less than thee
Would I have broke this happy dream;
It was a theme
For reason, much too strong for fantasy.
Therefore thou waked'st me wisely; yet
My dream thou brokest not, but continued'st it.
Thou art so true that thoughts of thee suffice
To make dreams truths, and fables histories;
Enter these arms, for since thou thought'st it best,
Not to dream all my dream, let's act the rest.
As lightning, or a taper's light,
Thine eyes, and not thy noise waked me;
Yet I thought thee
For thou lovest truth—an angel, at first sight;
But when I saw thou saw'st my heart,
And knew'st my thoughts beyond an angel's art,
When thou knew'st what I dreamt, when thou knew'st when
Excess of joy would wake me, and camest then,
I must confess, it could not choose but be
Profane, to think thee any thing but thee.
Coming and staying show'd thee, thee,
But rising makes me doubt, that now
Thou art not thou.
That love is weak where fear's as strong as he;
'Tis not all spirit, pure and brave,
If mixture it of fear, shame, honour have;
Perchance as torches, which must ready be,

JOHN DONNE

Men light and put out, so thou deal'st with me;
Thou camest to kindle, go'st to come; then I
Will dream that hope again, but else would die.

THE ECSTASY

WHERE, like a pillow on a bed,
A pregnant bank swell'd up, to rest
The violet's reclining head,
Sat we two, one another's best.
Our hands were firmly cemented
By a fast balm, which thence did spring;
Our eye-beams twisted, and did thread
Our eyes upon one double string.
So to engraft our hands, as yet
Was all the means to make us one;
And pictures in our eyes to get
Was all our propagation.
As, 'twixt two equal armies, Fate
Suspends uncertain victory,
Our souls—which to advance their state,
Were gone out-hung 'twixt her and me.
And whilst our souls negotiate there,
We like sepulchral statues lay;
All day, the same our postures were,
And we said nothing, all the day.
If any, so by love refined,
That he soul's language understood,
And by good love were grown all mind,
Within convenient distance stood,
He—though he knew not which soul spake,
Because both meant, both spake the same—

Might thence a new concoction take,
And part far purer than he came.
This ecstasy doth unperplex
(We said) and tell us what we love;
We see by this, it was not sex;
We see, we saw not, what did move:
But as all several souls contain
Mixture of things they know not what,
Love these mix'd souls doth mix again,
And makes both one, each this, and that.
A single violet transplant,
The strength, the colour, and the size
All which before was poor and scant
Redoubles still, and multiplies.
When love with one another so
Interanimates two souls,
That abler soul, which thence doth flow,
Defects of loneliness controls.
We then, who are this new soul, know,
Of what we are composed, and made,
For th' atomies of which we grow
Are souls, whom no change can invade.
But, O alas! so long, so far,
Our bodies why do we forbear?
They are ours, though not we; we are
Th' intelligences, they the spheres.
We owe them thanks, because they thus
Did us, to us, at first convey,
Yielded their senses' force to us,
Nor are dross to us, but allay.
On man heaven's influence works not so,
But that it first imprints the air;
For soul into the soul may flow,
Though it to body first repair.
As our blood labours to beget
Spirits, as like souls as it can;
Because such fingers need to knit
That subtle knot, which makes us man;
So must pure lovers' souls descend
To affections, and to faculties,

Which sense may reach and apprehend,
Else a great prince in prison lies.
To our bodies turn we then, that so
Weak men on love reveal'd may look;
Love's mysteries in souls do grow,
But yet the body is his book.
And if some lover, such as we,
Have heard this dialogue of one,
Let him still mark us, he shall see
Small change when we're to bodies gone.

THE EXPIRATIONSO, SO, BREAK OFF THIS LAST
LAMENTING KISS,

Which sucks two souls, and vapours both away;
Turn, thou ghost, that way, and let me turn this,
And let ourselves benight our happiest day.
We ask none leave to love; nor will we owe
Any so cheap a death as saying, "Go."
Go; and if that word have not quite killed thee,
Ease me with death, by bidding me go too.
Or, if it have, let my word work on me,
And a just office on a murderer do.
Except it be too late, to kill me so,
Being double dead, going, and bidding, "Go."

THE FLEA

Mark but this flea, and mark in this,
How little that which thou deniest me is;
It suck'd me first, and now sucks thee,
And in this flea our two bloods mingled be.
Thou know'st that this cannot be said
A sin, nor shame, nor loss of maidenhead;
Yet this enjoys before it woo,
And pamper'd swells with one blood made of two;
And this, alas! is more than we would do.
O stay, three lives in one flea spare,
Where we almost, yea, more than married are.
This flea is you and I, and this
Our marriage bed, and marriage temple is.
Though parents grudge, and you, we're met,
And cloister'd in these living walls of jet.
Though use make you apt to kill me,
Let not to that self-murder added be,
And sacrilege, three sins in killing three.
Cruel and sudden, hast thou since
Purpled thy nail in blood of innocence?
Wherein could this flea guilty be,
Except in that drop which it suck'd from thee?
Yet thou triumph'st, and say'st that thou
Find'st not thyself nor me the weaker now.
'Tis true; then learn how false fears be;
Just so much honour, when thou yield'st to me,

JOHN DONNE

Will waste, as this flea's death took life from thee.

THE FUNERAL

WHOEVER comes to shroud me, do not harm,
Nor question much,
That subtle wreath of hair, which crowns my arm;
The mystery, the sign, you must not touch;
For 'tis my outward soul,
Viceroy to that, which then to heaven being gone,
Will leave this to control

And keep these limbs, her provinces, from dissolution.
For if the sinewy thread my brain lets fall
Through every part
Can tie those parts, and make me one of all,
Those hairs which upward grew, and strength and art
Have from a better brain,
Can better do 't; except she meant that I
By this should know my pain,
As prisoners then are manacled, when they're condemn'd to die.
Whate'er she meant by it, bury it with me,
For since I am
Love's martyr, it might breed idolatry,
If into other hands these relics came.
As 'twas humility
To afford to it all that a soul can do,
So 'tis some bravery,
That since you would have none of me, I bury some of you.

JOHN DONNE

THE GOOD-MORROW

I WONDER by my troth, what thou and I
Did, till we loved? were we not wean'd till then?
But suck'd on country pleasures, childishly?
Or snorted we in the Seven Sleepers' den?
'Twas so; but this, all pleasures fancies be;
If ever any beauty I did see,

Which I desired, and got, 'twas but a dream of thee.
And now good-morrow to our waking souls,
Which watch not one another out of fear;
For love all love of other sights controls,
And makes one little room an everywhere.
Let sea-discoverers to new worlds have gone;
Let maps to other, worlds on worlds have shown;
Let us possess one world; each hath one, and is one.
My face in thine eye, thine in mine appears,
And true plain hearts do in the faces rest;
Where can we find two better hemispheres
Without sharp north, without declining west?
Whatever dies, was not mix'd equally;
If our two loves be one, or thou and I
Love so alike that none can slacken, none can die.

THE INDIFFERENT

I CAN love both fair and brown;
Her whom abundance melts, and her whom want betrays;
Her who loves loneliness best, and her who masks and plays;
Her whom the country form'd, and whom the town;
Her who believes, and her who tries;
Her who still weeps with spongy eyes,
And her who is dry cork, and never cries.
I can love her, and her, and you, and you;
I can love any, so she be not true.
Will no other vice content you?
Will it not serve your turn to do as did your mothers?
Or have you all old vices spent, and now would find out others?
Or doth a fear that men are true torment you?
O we are not, be not you so;
Let me-and do you-twenty know;
Rob me, but bind me not, and let me go.
Must I, who came to travel thorough you,
Grow your fix'd subject, because you are true?
Venus heard me sigh this song;
And by love's sweetest part, variety, she swore,
She heard not this till now; and that it should be so no more.
She went, examined, and return'd ere long,
And said, "Alas ! some two or three
Poor heretics in love there be,
Which think to stablish dangerous constancy.
But I have told them, 'Since you will be true,

JOHN DONNE

You shall be true to them who're false to you.' "

THE LEGACY

When last I died, and, dear, I die
As often as from thee I go,
Though it be but an hour ago
And lovers' hours be full eternity
I can remember yet, that I
Something did say, and something did bestow;
Though I be dead, which sent me, I might be
Mine own executor, and legacy.
I heard me say, "Tell her anon,
That myself," that is you, not I,
" Did kill me," and when I felt me die,
I bid me send my heart, when I was gone;
But I alas ! could there find none;
When I had ripp'd, and search'd where hearts should lie,
It kill'd me again, that I who still was true
In life, in my last will should cozen you.
Yet I found something like a heart,
But colours it, and corners had;
It was not good, it was not bad,
It was entire to none, and few had part;
As good as could be made by art
It seem'd, and therefore for our loss be sad.
I meant to send that heart instead of mine,
But O ! no man could hold it, for 'twas thine.

JOHN DONNE

THE MESSAGE

SEND home my long stray'd eyes to me,
Which, O! too long have dwelt on thee;
Yet since there they have learn'd such ill,
Such forced fashions,
And false passions,
That they be
Made by thee

Fit for no good sight, keep them still.
Send home my harmless heart again,
Which no unworthy thought could stain;
Which if it be taught by thine
To make jestings
Of protestings,
And break both
Word and oath,
Keep it, for then 'tis none of mine.
Yet send me back my heart and eyes,
That I may know, and see thy lies,
And may laugh and joy, when thou
Art in anguish
And dost languish
For some one
That will none,
Or prove as false as thou art now.

JOHN DONNE

THE PARADOX

No lover saith, I love, nor any other
Can judge a perfect lover;
He thinks that else none can or will agree,
That any loves but he;
I cannot say I loved, for who can say
He was kill'd yesterday.
Love with excess of heat, more young than old,
Death kills with too much cold;
We die but once, and who loved last did die,
He that saith, twice, doth lie;
For though he seem to move, and stir a while,
It doth the sense beguile.
Such life is like the light which bideth yet
When the life's light is set,
Or like the heat which fire in solid matter
Leaves behind, two hours after.
Once I loved and died; and am now become
Mine epitaph and tomb;
Here dead men speak their last, and so do I;
Love-slain, lo! here I die.

THE PRIMROSE, BEING AT MONTGOMERY
CASTLE, UPON THE HILL, ON WHICH IT IS
SITUATE

UPON this Primrose hill,
Where, if heaven would distil
A shower of rain, each several drop might go
To his own primrose, and grow manna so;
And where their form, and their infinity
Make a terrestrial galaxy,
As the small stars do in the sky;
I walk to find a true love; and I see
That 'tis not a mere woman, that is she,
But must or more or less than woman be.
Yet know I not, which flower
I wish; a six, or four;
For should my true-love less than woman be,
She were scarce anything; and then, should she
Be more than woman, she would get above
All thought of sex, and think to move
My heart to study her, and not to love.
Both these were monsters; since there must reside
Falsehood in woman, I could more abide,
She were by art, than nature falsified.
Live, primrose, then, and thrive
With thy true number five;
And, woman, whom this flower doth represent,
With this mysterious number be content;

Ten is the farthest number; if half ten
Belongs to each woman, then
Each woman may take half us men;
Or-if this will not serve their turn-since all
Numbers are odd, or even, and they fall
First into five, women may take us all.

THE PROHIBITION

TAKE heed of loving me;
At least remember, I forbade it thee;
Not that I shall repair my unthrifty waste
Of breath and blood, upon thy sighs and tears,
By being to thee then what to me thou wast;
But so great joy our life at once outwears.
Then, lest thy love by my death frustrate be,
If thou love me, take heed of loving me.
Take heed of hating me,
Or too much triumph in the victory;
Not that I shall be mine own officer,
And hate with hate again retaliate;
But thou wilt lose the style of conqueror,
If I, thy conquest, perish by thy hate.
Then, lest my being nothing lessen thee,
If thou hate me, take heed of hating me.
Yet love and hate me too;
So these extremes shall ne'er their office do;
Love me, that I may die the gentler way;
Hate me, because thy love's too great for me;
Or let these two, themselves, not me, decay;
So shall I live thy stage, not triumph be.
Lest thou thy love and hate, and me undo,
O let me live, yet love and hate me too.

THE RELIC

WHEN my grave is broke up again
Some second guest to entertain,
-For graves have learn'd that woman-head,
To be to more than one a bed-
And he that digs it, spies
A bracelet of bright hair about the bone,
Will he not let us alone,
And think that there a loving couple lies,
Who thought that this device might be some way
To make their souls at the last busy day
Meet at this grave, and make a little stay?
If this fall in a time, or land,
Where mass-devotion doth command,
Then he that digs us up will bring
Us to the bishop or the king,
To make us relics; then
Thou shalt be a Mary Magdalen, and I
A something else thereby;
All women shall adore us, and some men.
And, since at such time miracles are sought,
I would have that age by this paper taught
What miracles we harmless lovers wrought.
First we loved well and faithfully,
Yet knew not what we loved, nor why;
Difference of sex we never knew,
No more than guardian angels do;
Coming and going we

JOHN DONNE

Perchance might kiss, but not between those meals;
Our hands ne'er touch'd the seals,
Which nature, injured by late law, sets free.
These miracles we did; but now alas!
All measure, and all language, I should pass,
Should I tell what a miracle she was.

THE SUN RISING

BUSY old fool, unruly Sun,
Why dost thou thus,
Through windows, and through curtains, call on us?
Must to thy motions lovers' seasons run?
Saucy pedantic wretch, go chide
Late school-boys and sour prentices,
Go tell court-huntsmen that the king will ride,
Call country ants to harvest offices;
Love, all alike, no season knows nor clime,
Nor hours, days, months, which are the rags of time.
Thy beams so reverend, and strong
Why shouldst thou think?
I could eclipse and cloud them with a wink,
But that I would not lose her sight so long.
If her eyes have not blinded thine,
Look, and to-morrow late tell me,
Whether both th' Indias of spice and mine
Be where thou left'st them, or lie here with me.
Ask for those kings whom thou saw'st yesterday,
And thou shalt hear, "All here in one bed lay."
She's all states, and all princes I;
Nothing else is;
Princes do but play us; compared to this,
All honour's mimic, all wealth alchemy.
Thou, Sun, art half as happy as we,
In that the world's contracted thus;
Thine age asks ease, and since thy duties be

JOHN DONNE

To warm the world, that's done in warming us.
Shine here to us, and thou art everywhere;
This bed thy center is, these walls thy sphere.

THE TOKENSEND ME SOME TOKENS, THAT MY HOPE MAY LIVE

Or that my easeless thoughts may sleep and rest;
Send me some honey, to make sweet my hive,
That in my passions I may hope the best.
I beg nor ribbon wrought with thine own hands,
To knit our loves in the fantastic strain
Of new-touch'd youth; nor ring to show the stands
Of our affection, that, as that's round and plain,
So should our loves meet in simplicity;
No, nor the corals, which thy wrist enfold,
Laced up together in congruity,
To show our thoughts should rest in the same hold;
No, nor thy picture, though most gracious,
And most desired, 'cause 'tis like the best
Nor witty lines, which are most copious,
Within the writings which thou hast address'd.
Send me nor this nor that, to increase my score,
But swear thou think'st I love thee, and no more.

THE TRIPLE FOOL

I am two fools, I know,
For loving, and for saying so
In whining poetry;
But where's that wise man, that would not be I,
If she would not deny?
Then as th' earth's inward narrow crooked lanes
Do purge sea water's fretful salt away,
I thought, if I could draw my pains
Through rhyme's vexation, I should them allay.
Grief brought to numbers cannot be so fierce,
For he tames it, that fetters it in verse.
But when I have done so,
Some man, his art and voice to show,
Doth set and sing my pain;
And, by delighting many, frees again
Grief, which verse did restrain.
To love and grief tribute of verse belongs,
But not of such as pleases when 'tis read.
Both are increased by such songs,
For both their triumphs so are published,
And I, which was two fools, do so grow three.
Who are a little wise, the best fools be.

THE UNDERTAKING

I HAVE done one braver thing
Than all the Worthies did;
And yet a braver thence doth spring,
Which is, to keep that hid. It were but madness now to impart
The skill of specular stone,
When he, which can have learn'd the art
To cut it, can find none.
So, if I now should utter this,
Others-because no more
Such stuff to work upon, there is
Would love but as before.
But he who loveliness within
Hath found, all outward loathes,
For he who color loves, and skin,
Loves but their oldest clothes.
If, as I have, you also do
Virtue in woman see,
And dare love that, and say so too,
And forget the He and She;
And if this love, though placèd so,
From profane men you hide,
Which will no faith on this bestow,
Or, if they do, deride;
Then you have done a braver thing
Than all the Worthies did;
And a braver thence will spring,

JOHN DONNE

Which is, to keep that hid.

THE WILL

BEFORE I sigh my last gasp, let me breathe,
Great Love, some legacies; I here bequeath
Mine eyes to Argus, if mine eyes can see;
If they be blind, then, Love, I give them thee;
My tongue to Fame; to ambassadors mine ears;
To women, or the sea, my tears;
Thou, Love, hast taught me heretofore
By making me serve her who had twenty more,
That I should give to none, but such as had too much before.
My constancy I to the planets give;
My truth to them who at the court do live;
My ingenuity and openness,
To Jesuits; to buffoons my pensiveness;
My silence to any, who abroad hath been;
My money to a Capuchin:
Thou, Love, taught'st me, by appointing me
To love there, where no love received can be,
Only to give to such as have an incapacity. My faith I give to Roman
Catholics;
All my good works unto the Schismatics
Of Amsterdam; my best civility
And courtship to an University;
My modesty I give to soldiers bare;
My patience let gamesters share:
Thou, Love, taught'st me, by making me
Love her that holds my love disparity,

Only to give to those that count my gifts indignity.
I give my reputation to those
Which were my friends; mine industry to foes;
To schoolmen I bequeath my doubtfulness;
My sickness to physicians, or excess;
To nature all that I in rhyme have writ;
And to my company my wit:
Thou, Love, by making me adore
Her, who begot this love in me before,
Taught'st me to make, as though I gave, when I do but restore. To him for whom the passing-bell next tolls,
I give my physic books; my written rolls
Of moral counsels I to Bedlam give;
My brazen medals unto them which live
In want of bread; to them which pass among
All foreigners, mine English tongue:
Though, Love, by making me love one
Who thinks her friendship a fit portion
For younger lovers, dost my gifts thus disproportion.
Therefore I'll give no more, but I'll undo
The world by dying, because love dies too.
Then all your beauties will be no more worth
Than gold in mines, where none doth draw it forth;
And all your graces no more use shall have,
Than a sun-dial in a grave:
Thou, Love, taught'st me by making me
Love her who doth neglect both me and thee,
To invent, and practise this one way, to annihilate all three.

TWICKENHAM GARDEN

Blasted with sighs, and surrounded with tears,
Hither I come to seek the spring,
And at mine eyes, and at mine ears,
Receive such balms as else cure every thing.
But O ! self-traitor, I do bring
The spider Love, which transubstantiates all,
And can convert manna to gall;
And that this place may thoroughly be thought
True paradise, I have the serpent brought.
'Twere wholesomer for me that winter did
Benight the glory of this place,
And that a grave frost did forbid
These trees to laugh and mock me to my face;
But that I may not this disgrace
Endure, nor yet leave loving, Love, let me
Some senseless piece of this place be;
Make me a mandrake, so I may grow here,
Or a stone fountain weeping out my year.
Hither with crystal phials, lovers, come,
And take my tears, which are love's wine,
And try your mistress' tears at home,
For all are false, that taste not just like mine.
Alas ! hearts do not in eyes shine,
Nor can you more judge women's thoughts by tears,
Than by her shadow what she wears.
O perverse sex, where none is true but she,

JOHN DONNE

Who's therefore true, because her truth kills me.

VALEDICTION TO HIS BOOK

I'll tell thee now (dear love) what thou shalt do
To anger destiny, as she doth us;
How I shall stay, though she eloign me thus,
And how posterity shall know it too;
How thine may out-endure
Sibyl's glory, and obscure
Her who from Pindar could allure,
And her, through whose help Lucan is not lame,
And her, whose book (they say) Homer did find, and name.
Study our manuscripts, those myriads
Of letters, which have past 'twixt thee and me;
Thence write our annals, and in them will be
To all whom love's subliming fire invades,
Rule and example found;
There the faith of any ground
No schismatic will dare to wound,
That sees, how Love this grace to us affords,
To make, to keep, to use, to be these his records.
This book, as long-lived as the elements,
Or as the world's form, this all-gravèd tome
In cypher writ, or new made idiom;
We for Love's clergy only are instruments;
When this book is made thus,
Should again the ravenous
Vandals and Goths invade us,
Learning were safe; in this our universe,

Schools might learn sciences, spheres music, angels verse.
 Here Love's divines-since all divinity
 Is love or wonder-may find all they seek,
 Whether abstract spiritual love they like,
 Their souls exhaled with what they do not see;
 Or, loth so to amuse
 Faith's infirmity, they choose
 Something which they may see and use;
 For, though mind be the heaven, where love doth sit,
 Beauty a convenient type may be to figure it. Here more than in their books
 may lawyers find,
 Both by what titles mistresses are ours,
 And how prerogative these states devours,
 Transferr'd from Love himself, to womankind;
 Who, though from heart and eyes,
 They exact great subsidies,
 Forsake him who on them relies;
 And for the cause, honour, or conscience give;
 Chimeras vain as they or their prerogative. Here statesmen-or of them, they
 which can read-
 May of their occupation find the grounds;
 Love, and their art, alike it deadly wounds,
 If to consider what 'tis, one proceed.
 In both they do excel
 Who the present govern well,
 Whose weakness none doth, or dares tell;
 In this thy book, such will there something see,
 As in the Bible some can find out alchemy. Thus vent thy thoughts; abroad
 I'll study thee,
 As he removes far off, that great heights takes;
 How great love is, presence best trial makes,
 But absence tries how long this love will be;
 To take a latitude
 Sun, or stars, are fitliest view'd
 At their brightest, but to conclude
 Of longitudes, what other way have we,

BUT TO MARK WHEN AND WHERE THE DARK
ECLIPSES BE? WITCHCRAFT BY A PICTURE I FIX
MINE EYE ON THINE, AND THERE

Pity my picture burning in thine eye;
My picture drown'd in a transparent tear,
When I look lower I espy;
Hadst thou the wicked skill
By pictures made and marr'd, to kill,
How many ways mightst thou perform thy will?
But now I've drunk thy sweet salt tears,
And though thou pour more, I'll depart;
My picture vanished, vanish all fears
That I can be endamaged by that art;
Though thou retain of me
One picture more, yet that will be,
Being in thine own heart, from all malice free.

WOMAN'S CONSTANCY

NOW thou hast loved me one whole day,
To-morrow when thou leavest, what wilt thou say?
Wilt thou then antedate some new-made vow?
Or say that now
We are not just those persons which we were?
Or that oaths made in reverential fear
Of Love, and his wrath, any may forswear?
Or, as true deaths true marriages untie,
So lovers' contracts, images of those,
Bind but till sleep, death's image, them unloose?
Or, your own end to justify,
For having purposed change and falsehood, you
Can have no way but falsehood to be true?
Vain lunatic, against these 'scapes I could
Dispute, and conquer, if I would;
Which I abstain to do,
For by to-morrow I may think so too.



24402249R00068

Made in the USA
Columbia, SC
27 August 2018

06-DHW-243

ISBN 9781514194539



9 781514 194539